

**Prue Purdey**

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**From:** Steve Moore [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 4 July 2017 10:16 PM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FIRE SERVICES BILL SELECT COMMITTEE 2017

**FIRE SERVICES BILL SELECT COMMITTEE 2017**

Ladies & Gentlemen

I would like to offer the following support for the Fire Services Bill 2017.

My name is Steve Moore and I am employed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB), I am in my 34<sup>th</sup> year with the brigade. During that time I have worked in a number of areas of the MFB, from Operations, serving the community in Central, Southern and Eastern Districts. Community Education/Community Resilience dept developing programs and courses for at risk groups and commercial work places. My current role is as a Fire Services Communications Controller (FSCC), based at ESTA Tally Ho. This current role has shown me the merit in this new approach to Fire Safety and Response in Victoria. As an FSCC we have an overview of all stations in the Metropolitan District including their responses outside the Metropolitan District. One of the things that concerns me is the unreliable response and support for my Firefighters when responding with a volunteer brigade. I have the utmost respect for anyone who volunteers in any field, be it Emergency Response or the local cricket club. Having said that, the simple facts are that a volunteer brigade cannot guarantee a consistent response to every call.

At a recent call in the Metropolitan District near the boundary a call was upgraded to send more resources to the fire. In the upgrade were two volunteer brigades, as I couldn't be certain of their capacity or capability to furnish Breathing Apparatus operators I increased the response to include two more staffed appliances. This was the only way I could ensure the safety of my firefighters on scene and ensure they had adequate Breathing Apparatus resources.

CFA brigade operate under four different response tables :- they have a response matrix for Weekday daylight (business) hours, another table for Weekday night response, a third table for Weekends and a fourth for Total Fire Ban days. When the CFA started operations a high percentage of people worked and lived locally and were able to quickly leave work and respond to the call of the fire siren. Nowadays there are less local businesses, we have been overtaken by " Supermarkets & Shopping Centres" No longer do the children join their parents in the local shops and businesses. We are losing or have lost that local work force that previously supplied the volunteers to respond to alarms of fire. Hence the 4 different tables of response as brigades have to seek resources to cover them during times that their members are away at work or otherwise occupied. More and more often Staffed brigades are travelling longer distances to cover more area of volunteer brigades when they don't have resources available. A Captain I was talking to recently has 91 members on the books for his brigade but generally relies on 3 or 4 members to respond during the working day.

Every day we hear news reports of the growth and expected growth of the Victorian population, to meet this growth the Fire Services have to grow and respond to the ever growing metropolitan area and growing regional centres. A system hamstrung by antiquated legislation will not be able to respond to this growth. Looking at the profile of the Metropolitan area when the legislation was enacted and seeing where it is today it is obvious that the Victorian Fire Services have not kept pace with the needs of the population. We have a real chance with the changes to the CFA Act

and creation of Fire Rescue Victoria along with the Boundary Review mechanism to bring our Fire Services up to date and meet the future demands of a growing Victoria.

I live in an area of Croydon North outside of the Metropolitan Fire District; as such I am serviced by a volunteer brigade. My neighbours 120 metres away are on the inside of the line that denotes the Metropolitan Fire District and if they have a fire they will have two fully crewed appliances responded. If they suffer a heart attack they will have a fire truck staffed by trained EMR firefighters along with an ambulance responded to them. Why this discrepancy? Surely everyone in Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Centres is entitled to the same services?

This is why we need to change the current arrangements and I hope this Committee can be the conduit for such a modernisation of Victoria's Fire Services – Our Fire Services

Regards

Steve Moore



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